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## Fantasy (Scorched Life)



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### Chapter 1 by thepinkdolphin

The dancing light of the fire cast a shadow on the weary king's face who slouched in his throne, his head drooping down. His eyes shut; it was clear to everyone that he was disinterested in the villager who sat before him. The complaints of vicious attacks on the castle's outlying settlements fell on deaf ears. The king lets out a loud snore and jerks awake, 'I've had enough of this, leave!'

The king had grown infamous in recent years for his severe lack of care. Once a respected ruler, his ways had become corrupted by greed. His love for his people and land lost after his wife, the queen, died with no explanation in her sleep several years earlier. Very few bothered to request a council with him, it was well known that the king no longer cared for his people.

'Thank heavens that is over, I could barely keep awake.' The king's deep voice echoed throughout the hall. He sat pondering his thoughts for a few moments before rising to his feet and leaving the room. The guards listened as his foot steps followed him down the passage to his sleeping chambers. The door creaked open and closed with a thud. The castle was silent again.

The king laid in bed, staring at the empty other half of the bed. He was still adjusting to the fact that his wife was gone. A single tear rolled down his cheek through his scruffy beard as he blew out the candle, before slowly falling asleep. In the still hours of the night, a shadow slithered into the king's chamber. The shadow moved slowly, its long fingers now covered his mouth before piercing his heart several times with a tiny blade. The shadow was gone faster than it had arrived and the king lay dead in his bed. ooph

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## Chapter 2 by R



The princess took the throne.

There was talk, there is always talk. Talk about if she should get married soon. Talk about if she's the one who killed her father. Talk about if she even deserved the throne.

The fires burned and burned and burned on his funeral pyre. Her life burned and burned and burned on that funeral pyre. Her mother was dead and her father was dead and she stood all alone where she had once had so much.

"This is my duty." She muttered to herself. "I need to fix all of this. Fix what my father wrought. I am the princess - I am the Queen. I can do this."

She listened to every complaint that she heard, and so many rushed in. She wrote many new laws, so many decrees, listened to appraisals on foreign affairs and spent her few spare hours of sleep so exhausted. She dozed while they dressed her, dozed while she bathed, made every single hour count.

This was her kingdom. She would fix it, make it glorious and happy. The people cheered her name. She understood why her father had grown so callous and cruel. Not accepting it, but understanding.

Heavy is the head that wears the crown.

As she stared at notes drifting in and out of sleep she'd see a shadow in the corner of her eye. It watched over her, a guardian angel, as it were. A distant memory. A happy dream.

It stared back at her.

Phase Two, Complete.

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